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SUBJECT: USAID/DART Update 2 on the Humanitarian Situation in North Kivu

REF: (A) KINSHASA 0981; (B) KINSHASA 1014

¶1. Begin summary: As of November 19, the situation in Goma, North Kivu was calm. On November 18, the National Congress of the Defense of the People (CNDP) announced plans to pull back approximately 40 km in order to provide a corridor for humanitarian assistance. As of 0800 hours on November 20, the UN reported that CNDP had pulled back to Kikuku on the westernmost approach to Kanyabayonga from the south, and to Kiberizi, having departed Rwindi. In addition, CNDP has promised to pull back to Mabenga, between Rwindi and Kiwanja, but the move is still unconfirmed. Humanitarian agencies continue to conduct assessments, evaluations, and provide assistance to the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) throughout Eastern Congo. Working in pursuit of that goal, the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART) continues to liaise with humanitarian partners and UN agencies, to conduct field assessments, and to plan for additional support and programs in North Kivu. End summary.

HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION AND INFORMATION

¶2. At the November 17 coordination meeting between UN agencies, donors, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the UN World Food Program (WFP) reported completed 15-day distributions for approximately 80,000 people in Rutshuru. Caritas continues to register beneficiaries, and a distribution for 16,000 additional beneficiaries is planned for the coming week. During the week of November 18, WFP, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Food Security Cluster, and NGOs plan to conduct an evaluation of Rutshuru, particularly areas that have witnessed significant movement of populations in recent weeks. In addition, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) plans to conduct an assessment in Jomba, North Kivu, in anticipation of a possible non-food item (NFI) distribution.

¶3. On November 19, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that approximately 2,000 residents of DRC crossed the border into Uganda on November 18. With the latest influx of refugees, UNHCR estimates that more than 14,500 refugees have arrived in Uganda since the end of August. In previous weeks, the

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had been providing services to DRC IDPs near the Ugandan border, however, the organization evacuated following a security incident and has not returned. USAID/DART staff are following the situation and liaising with USG colleagues covering the movement and situation from Kampala, Uganda.

¶4. On November 18, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that IRC evaluations indicate that 6,919 IDP families are currently located in Goma. The IDPs are staying with host families and in public places. In coming days, humanitarian agencies plan to conduct a registration to confirm IRC's preliminary numbers.

¶5. On November 18, the UN World Health Organization (WHO) announced that the strike among health workers ended November 17 and all health staff returned to work on November 18. WHO also announced a planned distribution of basic health kits to health centers and hospitals November 18, prioritizing health facilities that are not supported by an external agency. The priority list distributed by WHO includes Zones de sant in Goma, Karisimbi, Kirotshe, and Mweso.

¶6. On November 18, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) announced the completion of the integrated measles vaccination campaign in Kibati and Kirotshe. During the campaign, UNICEF vaccinated approximately 12,000 out of a target of 13,000 children in Kirotshe. Numbers are not available for Kibati. UNICEF plans to commence a similar campaign in Masisi around November 21.

¶7. Within the humanitarian community, the conversations regarding moving the IDPs of Kibati 1 and 2 camps to Mugunga 3 camp continue. On November 17, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) announced the results of surveys conducted in Kibati 1 and 2 camps, asking IDPs about moving to a safer location. Fifty-nine percent of Kibati 1 residents and 60 percent of Kibati 2 residents responded favorably to being relocated. USAID/DART staff caution, however, that NRC did not inform the respondents of the location for the new camp. According to OCHA, the process of deciding which IDPs will move to the new camp and how the IDPs will move is ongoing, and no specific dates have been set. Humanitarian agencies continue to prepare the Mugunga 3 site, and MONUC planned to commence work on the road to the camp on November 18. According to a plan by the UNHCR, vulnerable populations will be transported to the empty spaces in Mugunga 1 and 2 camps. UNHCR plans to conduct assessments and survey IDPs during the week of November 18. (NOTE: Kibati and Mugunga 3 camp are located approximately 8 km apart. END NOTE.)

HUMANITARIAN ASSESSMENTS AND FIELD VISITS

¶8. On November 17, the USAID/DART Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Officer traveled to Shasha and Nzulo IDP camps west of Goma. The multi-agency assessment team included representatives from UNICEF, WHO, Oxfam, and other NGO partners and planned to conduct assessments on health and WASH services, and to determine the origin of local cholera cases.

¶9. According to the USAID/DART WASH Officer, Shasha Camp holds approximately 700 households and Solidarities has provided minimal sanitation services. A more robust response was planned; however, implementing partners Oxfam and World Vision are conflicting regarding provision of services.

¶10. The inter-agency team traveled to the camps in hopes of investigating whether cholera cases reported in Mugunga 1 camp originated in Mugunga 1 camp, or whether the cases originated in Nzulo Camp. According to the assessment team, the cholera cases in Mugunga 1 Camp are local cases and did not come from Nzulo Camp. USAID/DART staff noted poor chlorination practices at the local lake and overt water contamination due to fecal matter at the water pumping sites.

¶11. On November 18, USAID/DART staff and other USG personnel travelled to Minova, South Kivu, to attend an OCHA-run, joint North and South Kivu Coordination meeting, and to obtain initial

information on the humanitarian situation and needs. According to participants at the coordination meeting, IRC, World Vision, and Maltezer have completed registration of North Kivu IDPs in Minova. As the lead organization for IDP registration, World Vision plans to verify the numbers and address concerns before confirming the current count of 6,129 IDP families. Registration is ongoing in Bweremana, Shasha, and Kitoshe, and official numbers are expected on November 19.

¶12. Food distributions in Minova are scheduled to commence on November 21 and conclude on November 27. During the distribution, IDPs will receive a complete 30-day ration, although USAID/DART staff noted that in other parts of North Kivu, WFP has been distributing 10- and 15-day rations. ICRC will distribute the food rations for the North Kivu area nearby Minova, and Maltezer will distribute rations for South Kivu. WFP's South Kivu office is also considering food distributions for Minova host families.

¶13. Humanitarian agencies are also planning NFI distributions for Minova, scheduled to commence on November 20. World Vision and IRC plan to distribute to beneficiaries in South Kivu, and ICRC plans to distribute to beneficiaries in North Kivu. In addition, UNHCR plans to distribute cooking wood through local partners prior to or following the planned food distribution, but has not yet determined a distribution date.

¶14. USAID/DART staff noted concern regarding the level of heavily armed forces present in Minova. Due to the military presence, NGOs are concerned that the planned distributions might become incidences for insecurity, particularly because NGOs excluded the Armed Forces of DRC (FARDC) dependents from registering for assistance. OCHA and UNHCR have increased the sensitization campaigns to FARDC and DRC government officials in Goma, Bukavu, and Minova. Oxfam/Great Britain (Oxfam/GB) announced plans to provide WASH assistance to the Minova area; however donors instructed Oxfam/GB to consult with the cluster lead and other NGOs also interested in providing assistance in order to avoid conflicts and duplication of services. A WASH Cluster meeting is scheduled for November 24.

¶15. During the visit, Medecins sans Frontiers (MSF) noted plans to stop providing health assistance to all patients except cholera patients. Dates and reason for discontinuation are unknown. CAP ANAMUR, a Dutch NGO has volunteered to take over for MSF; however CAP ANAMUR does not yet have the required documentation to work in DRC.

¶16. USAID/DART staff noted no major checkpoints on the road to Minova, except for the local road maintenance system. In addition, the FARDC was mostly absent on the road until the team reached Minova. Throughout the trip, USAID/DART staff noted local people and humanitarian agencies moving freely and active markets along the road.

¶17. According to humanitarian agencies, spontaneous camps have sprung up near Minova. The camps received some assistance from UNICEF's Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) in September, but have not received anything since that time. During the visit, USAID/DART staff noted an ongoing registration process in anticipation of additional assistance. Despite the lack of a food distribution in the camp, USAID/DART staff noted that IDPs looked relatively healthy rather than malnourished, perhaps due to good coping mechanisms.

HUMANITARIAN CONCERN

¶18. Humanitarian agencies continue to enjoy increased access and continue to travel farther afield to conduct assessments and interview IDPs. Despite greater access, humanitarian agencies continue to follow several issues of concern closely. NGOs have reported incidents of human rights abuses and executions in several villages throughout North Kivu, including Kiwanja. In response to the concerns, on November 17 MONUC dispatched a Human Rights, Child Protection, and Civil Rights Team to Kiwanja to conduct a five-day assessment. MONUC is also concerned about reports of human rights abuses in Rwindi.

¶19. At the November 17 coordination meeting, Solidarities staff

raised a question about Protection Cluster activities, particularly in Kiwanja and Rutshuru. Although the Cluster is not conducting any activities, the Solidarities staff underscored the need for protection work in both areas. UNHCR announced plans to reopen the Ruthshuru base, and conduct an assessment on November 18 or November 19. USAID/DART staff planned to raise concern with other implementing partners, UN agencies, and donors on November 18.

¶20. NGOs continue to report incidents of forced recruitment of young men from villages throughout Eastern Congo. On November 19, Handicap International reported 12 cases of CNDP forced recruitment of young men in Rutshuru and eight in Kiwanja. Another NGO reported that CNDP was also forcibly recruiting soldiers in Kichanga and many young men were hiding as a result.

RESPONSE EFFORTS AND RELIEF COMMODITIES

¶21. Between November 12 and 18, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) provided five flights of emergency relief commodities including a total of 10,000 blankets, 5,400 water containers, 500 rolls of plastic sheeting, and 5,000 kitchen sets valued at more than 800,000 USD arrived in Goma. USAID/OFDA consigned the relief commodities to UNICEF for distribution to 25,000 IDP beneficiaries. In addition, beginning on November 20, USAID/OFDA plans to deliver overland shipments of 20,000 mosquito nets, 30,000 sleeping mats, 15,000 kitchen sets, and 40,000 kilograms of soap to Goma. USAID/OFDA plans to consign the additional emergency relief commodities to UNICEF for distribution to IDP beneficiaries.

¶22. A six-person USAID/DART Team based in Goma continues to monitor population movements and assess humanitarian conditions in North Kivu Province, facilitate coordination and information sharing among UN and relief agencies, and work with implementing partners to address the needs of conflict-affected populations. To date, USAID/OFDA has provided UNICEF with more than USD 3 million to support UNICEF's Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM). Since October 2007, USAID/OFDA has provided more than USD 22 million to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. USAID/OFDA is supporting programs in nutrition, health, agriculture, food security, logistics and relief commodities, economy and market systems, protection, water, sanitation, and hygiene, and shelter and settlements

GARVELINK